

Legislation to honor civilians killed in the line of duty passes 425-0

Hanna first freshman in House to have 3 bills approved in the 112th Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Federal employees killed in the line of duty will now be honored with a flag presented to their next of kin.

The House of Representatives today, by a vote of **425-0**, passed **H.R. 2061 the Civilian Service Recognition Act of 2011**

. The legislation allows the United States to present a flag to the family of a federal civilian employee who is killed on the job as a result of a criminal act, terrorism, natural disaster, or an extraordinary event as determined by the President.

U.S. Representative Richard Hanna (R-NY) sponsored the bill, which is supported by a wide array of groups and individuals including civil service organizations, former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and the American Legion. Rep. Hanna worked with the Legion to act on some concerns it raised regarding language in the bill and differentiating between military and civilian service.

"This is a modest, but significant benefit to honor federal civilian employees who work within our country and in countless overseas posts," Hanna said. "Ours is a grateful nation, one that values the sacrifices made in honor of this country. A life can never be repaid, but it can be honored."

Since 1992, almost 3,000 civilian federal workers have been killed while on duty, both in places like Iraq, Afghanistan, and Haiti – but also in places like Oklahoma City, and Austin, Texas. More than two million federal civilian employees work within our country and in countless overseas posts, many of them in dangerous jobs at agencies like Customs and Border Protection and the FBI.

Hanna's colleague to the south, U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), is the original co-sponsor of H.R. 2061. U.S. Representative Donna F. Edwards (D-MD), who shares an office next door to Hanna in the Cannon House Office Building, has also been a strong and vocal supporter of this legislation.

"Thousands of federal civilian employees who have sworn an oath to defend the flag have died while performing their official duties," Hinchey said. "Passing this bipartisan bill will allow that sacrifice to be honored through the presentation of an American flag. It is a fitting tribute, which demonstrates our nation's gratitude for those who paid the ultimate price in service to country."

"This is a long-overdue recognition to the 146,000 federal employees living in Maryland's 4th

Congressional District, many of whom place their life on the line every single day," Edwards said. "When Federal Civilian Servants take the oath of office they solemnly swear to 'defend the Constitution of the United States from enemies, both foreign and domestic.' I want to thank Congressman Hanna for his efforts and commend the passage of this legislation. The Civilian Service Recognition Act recognizes that civilian federal employees are often placed in harm's way and that our country honors sacrifices made in its service and defense."

Hanna is the first freshman in the House to have three bills approved in the 112th Congress.